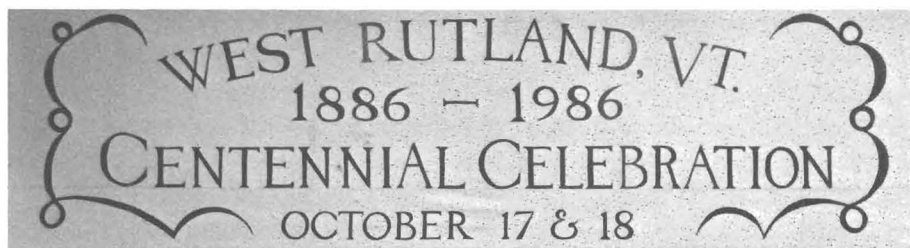


RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Quarterly

VOLUME XVII No. 2

1987



The Morgan house, Clarendon Avenue, reflects the prosperity of the 1880s in West Rutland. Built c. 1875, it is an outstanding example of Italianate style. David Morgan was a partner in opening the first marble quarry in West Rutland in 1844. The firm, Sheldon and Morgan, later became Sheldon and Slason, the largest marble company in West Rutland until the growth of the Vermont Marble Company in the late 1800s. Notable features of the house include the rooftop belvedere, plentiful cornice brackets, Italianate style porch, rounded arched windows and paneled front door with its side lights and transom.

Centennial '86

In July 1986, a small group of West Rutland citizens banded together to create and promote a celebration of West Rutland's one hundred years as a town. October 17 and 18 were chosen as the days to celebrate. Preparations quickly moved into high gear. Lorraine Wenta and Donna Perry were very busy lining up the grandest parade the town had ever seen. Jayne Pratt, Gert Barron and Peg Harvey mustered uncounted contributors for an "Ethnic Tasting Supper". Pat McGann and Diane Czachor rounded up flea marketeers from far and wide. The West Rutland Rotary Club plunked down a fourteen ton chunk of marble on the town hall lawn and challenged us to guess its weight! Dan Pratt designed a logo for the occasion and Merritt Budd had it reproduced on hundreds of Centennial T-shirts and Leo DiGangi had it made into buttons. Vic, Ethel and Ray Seigny joined forces with Judy Bloomer to ferret out reminders of the town's history with a photo display and historical tours. Pat Trepanier commandeered a helicopter for scenic flights on what turned out to be a spectacular autumn afternoon. The West Rutland American Legion generously sponsored a brilliant fireworks display.

More than 700 people came to the tasting supper that had been planned for about 300 — miraculously, nearly everyone who contributed food had doubled their recipes so there was more than enough for everyone. Afterwards, we danced the night away to the music of Donny P. and His Celebration at the Legion Hall.

Saturday, October 18 dawned crisp and clear. Preparations for the big day of celebration began early as committee members decorated a reviewing stand for the parade, flea marketeers began to set up their displays and Lorraine, Donna and Evie kept warm by running the length of Sheldon Avenue lining up the parade. An air of electric enthusiasm pervaded the entire town. The parade wound its way down Marble Street, to Chapel, Franklin and Blanchard Streets heading back via Clarendon Avenue and Main Street. Even when the head of the parade had to stop in front of Seigny's to let the tail go by, it was cause for celebration rather than concern. The crowds followed the parade which ended at the school. There they spent a delightful afternoon of flea market browsing, watching a Rugby match, taking rides in the helicopter, on the ox-cart sponsored by Chet Brown, Jr. and the ponies provided by Rosemary Brown and the 4-H club. Groups and individuals took historical tours to homes graciously opened to the public by their owners and occupants. A lady from Rutland guessed the weight of the marble block exactly (28,440 lbs.).

Kids, young and old enjoyed a late afternoon dance and light show by Starz in the school gym. At 7:00 p.m., as the Fire Department continued to serve hotdogs and hamburgers (more than 1,000 total), the first fireworks report rang out, signaling everyone to gather for the grand finale. As the multicolored starbursts brightened the sky the crowd cheered and spontaneously sang Happy Birthday to West Rutland.

The feeling remains, with the Centennial Committee sponsoring a Community Christmas Tree and Town Hall decorations. Early in 1987, the committee will begin to consider future possibilities for the town with a focus on the Town Hall.

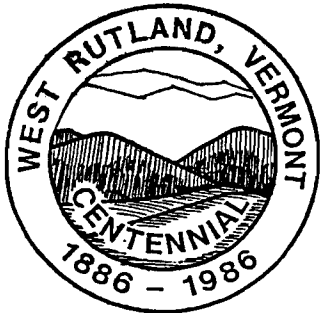
The spirit is back and all West Rutland should be proud!

Respectfully submitted,

William Finger
Lorraine Wenta
Donna Perry
Pat McGann
Paul Kulig
Rosemary Brown
Chet Brown, Jr.
Pat Trepanier
Ray Sevigny
Vic & Ethel Sevigny
Dan & Jayne Pratt
Diane & Steve Czachor
Evelyn Bania
Nancy & Ed Beane

Peg Harvey
Gert Baron
Marcie Hubbard
Merritt & Kathy Budd
Judy Bloomer
Lucy Wedin
Ned Johnson
Walt & Mary Werbinski
Mary Anne Prevendoski
Leo DiGangi
Dick Pietryka
and all the other citizens of West
Rutland who pitched in to make
Centennial '86 a resounding success!

*Reprinted from West Rutland
Annual Report, 1986*



ETHNIC TASTING SUPPER

6-9 PM October 17, 1986
West Rutland High School Multipurpose Room



The crowd begins to arrive. Planned for 300, by 10 PM more than 700 had been served. Women throughout the community volunteered food. Fortunately, the cooks doubled and tripled their recipes.

The menu included cabbage in many forms, but was not limited to corned beef, coleslaw, saurkraut with mushrooms, cabbage casserole, stuffed cabbage, red cabbage . . . Also salmon, ham, chicken cacciatori, lasagna, Swedish meatballs, stuffed shells, baked onions, French meat pie, Irish stew, baked beans, shepard's pie, baked Zita, kielbasa, Italian noche, porogies, as well as all kinds of fruit, and vegetable salads. Serving were: Janice Lloyd (lower right), Margery Hults and Mary Przybylo.

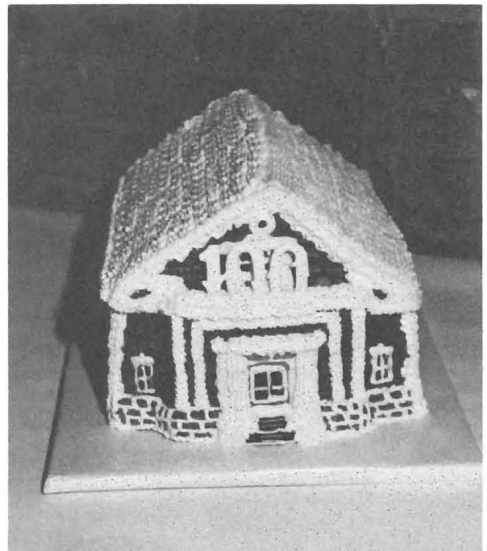


Ethnic Dinner



Attending the supper was Albert Wasik . . . now 97 years old, a former grand juror and selectman; still living alone in his home on Clarendon Avenue.

On display at the dinner was a cake baked in the shape of the Town Hall. Baked by Rosemary Brown, chair of the Board of Selectmen, it was kept and frozen. A month later on November 19, the dinner committee celebrated and "devoured" the cake.



Ethnic Dinner



Jayne Pratt (left) was in charge of the dinner. Facing the camera are Peg Harvey and Kathy Budd. Everything went smoothly in the kitchen, although many people waited two hours in line to taste some of the old Polish dishes. While they waited, people socialized and enjoyed the exhibits set up in the school.

Birthday cakes made by Rosemary Brown. As the crowd grew beyond expectations, the generous slices of cake were cut in half.



Centennial Dance

Legion Hall



The Donnie "P" orchestra from Albany, New York, provided the music.



Seen at the dance (from left to right) were Mary and Walter Piontek, Linda and Tom Harte, and Catherine and Steve Rosmus. Nearly 200 people attended the dance.

Parade

I Unit

Police Car
West Rutland Fire Dept.
West Rutland American Legion
& Auxiliary
Grand Marshall
Dignitaries

II Unit

Vt. National Little Star
Vt. National Teenage-Miss Hospitality
West Rutland Band
West Rutland Boy Scouts
United Church
St. Bridgets Church
St. Stanislaus Church
Rutland Town Fire Dept.
1985 Miss Vt. Pre-teen
1984 Vt. National Little Star

III Unit

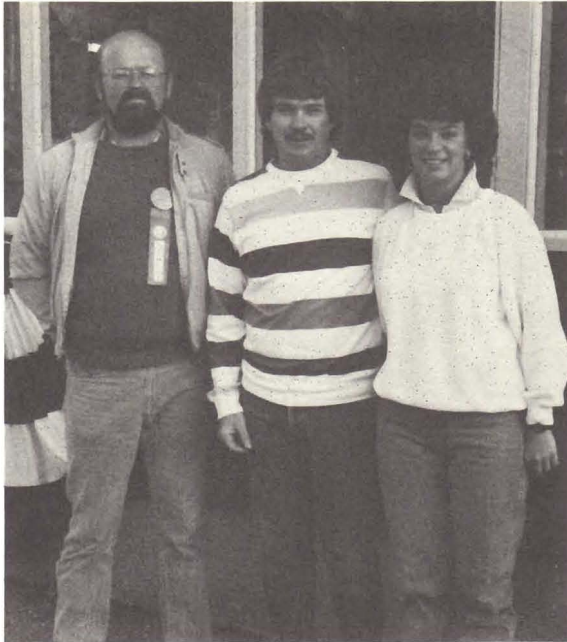
West Rutland Retired Faculty Cars
Rutland-West Neighborhood Services
Knights of Columbus
Mount Saint Joseph Band
Bicycle Built for 2
Old Fashion Dress
& Baby Carriage Float
Vietnam Veterans
Rutland City Fire Dept.
Proctor Fire Dept.

IV Unit

Green Mt. Model "A" Ford Club
Ed Fabian's Antique Cars
Castleton American Legion & Auxiliary
Mill River Band
Rutland V.F.W. Post 648 & Auxiliary
Centennial Clowns
Castleton Fire Truck

V Unit

Otter Valley Band
1938 Modern Woodsman of America Fire Truck
1945 Antique Fire Truck
Cairo Temple Motorized Units
National Guard Engineers
West Rutland Town Trucks



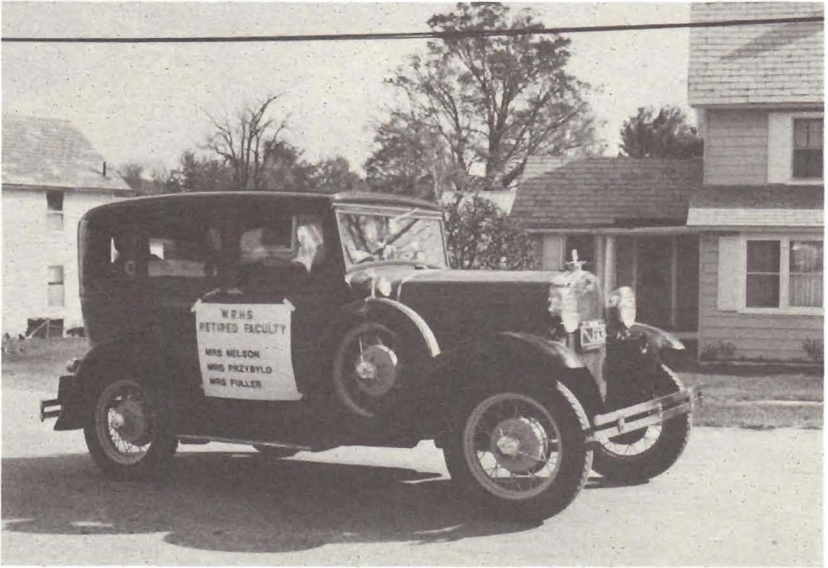
William Finger (left) Town Manager and Chairman of the Centennial Committee, watches the parade with Pete and Wendy McCullough, proprietors of the Sevigny Country Store.

Parade



Mr. and Mrs. Victor Sevigny were grand marshalls of the parade. Vic was Town Clerk for 53 years; Ethel was Assistant Town Clerk for 43 years. They were driven in a 1924 four-cylinder Ford owned by Herbert Spencer of East Clarendon.

Parade



Retired faculty of West Rutland High School were chauffeured in antique cars driven (above) by Mrs. Bernard Spencer and (below) by Mr. Bernard Spencer.



Parade



An 11 a.m. wedding at St. Stanislaus Church created a brief impasse along the parade route.

Parade



Senator Patrick J. Leahy and Mrs. Leahy joined the parade route.

Parade



The Boy Scouts are waiting for a solution to the parade that met itself at the intersection of Main and Marble Streets, in front of the Town Hall.



The parade committee apparently got the stalled parade underway again. (center) Lorraine Wenta, chair of the parade committee, (left) Ted Wenta, (right) Charlotte Lane, Town Hall secretary for 14 years. Center rear: Bill Finger, Town Manager. Left rear, with back to camera, is Senator Patrick Leahy.

Parade



Dignitaries: (left to right) Robert Bloomer, Jr., Town Prudential Committee; Jayne Pratt, Town Clerk; Florence Robillard, Rutland County Senator; Maureen Worley, School Board; Paul Kulig, Selectman; Edward Beane, Chairman of the School Board

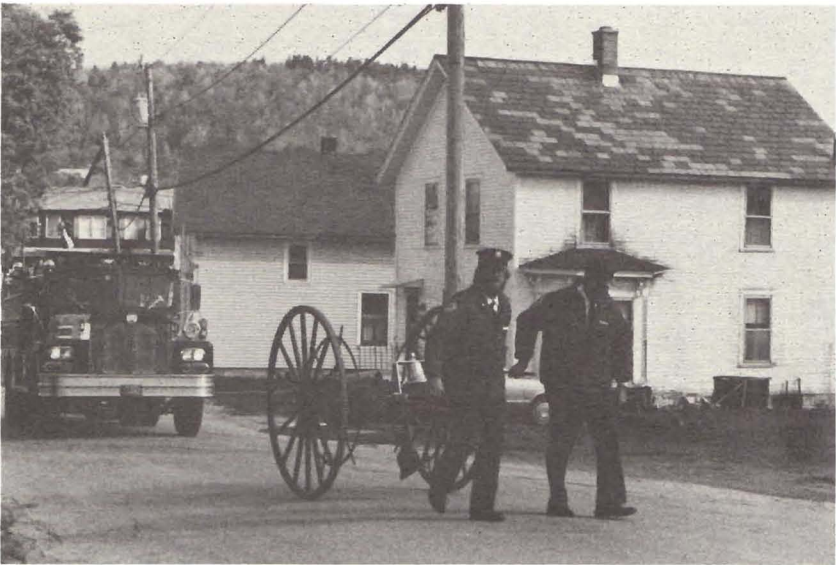


American Legion: (left to right) Frank Baginski, John Bloomer, Kenneth Handley; (rear) Robert Bloomer, John Kulig, Samuel Valach; (3rd row) Bernice Kulig, Frances Flynn

Parade



West Rutland High School Band



Old West Rutland No. 4 Hose Cart; Chet Brown, Jr. and Francis Cain, firemen. The Hose Company was established in 1891; became motorized in 1927.

Parade



The Good Old Days were celebrated with a float that included historic costumes, an old player piano and an antique rocker.

Parade



The parade moved too slowly for the bicycle-built-for-two to remain upright, so a trailer was attached to the flat bed of the float and the bicycle was mounted in a stationary position. Linda Wright and Mary Burke were grateful for their shawls to stave-off the chilly October air.



Joel Pliner, construction specialist, and David Dangler, director of Neighborhood Housing Services, are wearing suits made of Tyvek, a material used in building insulation; perfect parade apparel for a sunny but windy and cool October day. The suits shed internal moisture and are windproof. The NHS is working on restoring the buildings on Marble Street.

Special Events



Following the parade, the Fire Department held a barbecue from 11 a.m. until dark. Over a thousand hotdogs and over a thousand hamburgers were sold.



Flea market, held in the high school gym. Music provided by the Stars Touring Company, Hampton, New York. The band also played for the block dance after 4 p.m. The chill in the air forced the block dance to move into the gym when the flea market closed at 4 p.m.

Special Events



Toss and pitch game. Robert Kelly of Durgy Hill in charge.



Athletic field. Rugby game between Norwich University and the Rutland Rugby team; score 10 - 10.

Special Events

All day Saturday, on the school grounds back of the building, there were games and rides for the children (of all ages!). Bob Kelly of Durgy Hill furnished the children's games. A quarter bought a pony ride. Bill Tabor's ox team, Cuttingsville, was a curiosity. Do oxen wear shoes? Yes, but it takes eight shoes for an ox because they have a split hoof.



*Other events included an antique car display, arts and crafts, an historical picture exhibit and an historical church display at the United Church where Ruth Thrall played the organ. Various businesses provided gifts for prizes and raffles. The VFW Auxiliary, Post 648 in Rutland, sponsored an essay contest for the West Rutland School: **WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AMERICAN CITIZEN**. First prizes were won by Lisa Kish (grade 2), Amanda Blum (grade 2/3) and Bethany Glodzik (grade 4).*

Special Events



West Rutland Rotary Club sponsored a weight-guessing event. Gawet Marble Company provided the stone. "Red" Sutkoski, proprietor of Marble Valley Restaurant, did some careful measuring and bought three tickets, one for his wife, one for his daughter and one for himself. His daughter, Lynn Jenne of E. Washington Street, Rutland, held the winning ticket for the exact weight, 28,400 pounds.



For \$15.00, a person could circle over the town in a helicopter. Gordon Holmes, Command Antenna, Woodstock, was the pilot.

Special Events



The 14-year old retired race horse pulled the antique buggy, used when the horse and buggy was the standard means of travel.

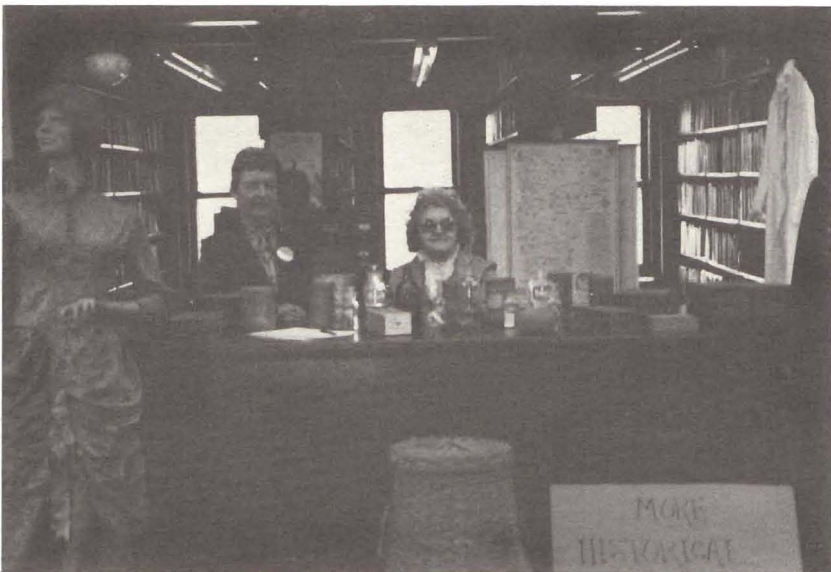


Great fun bouncing around inside the castle!

Historical Displays



School Library. Display in charge of Judy Bloomer with Doris Humphreys assisting.



West Rutland Library. On display: old apothecary supplies, antique wedding dress, a "feather basket".

Historic Houses



Carini house, located on Main Street, built c. 1798, considerably altered over the years. Little is known about its history. Presently owned by Peter Carini. In renovating, he found a board upstairs with the date 1798 etched on it. Three fireplaces and Dutch ovens have been restored.



Ross house, north of Morgan house on Clarendon Avenue, c. 1874. Owned in 1880s by Willard Ross, a farmer. Excellent example of Italianate style. Distinctive features include the Italianate porch, paired and scrolled cornice brackets, bay window and rooftop belvedere.

Historic Houses

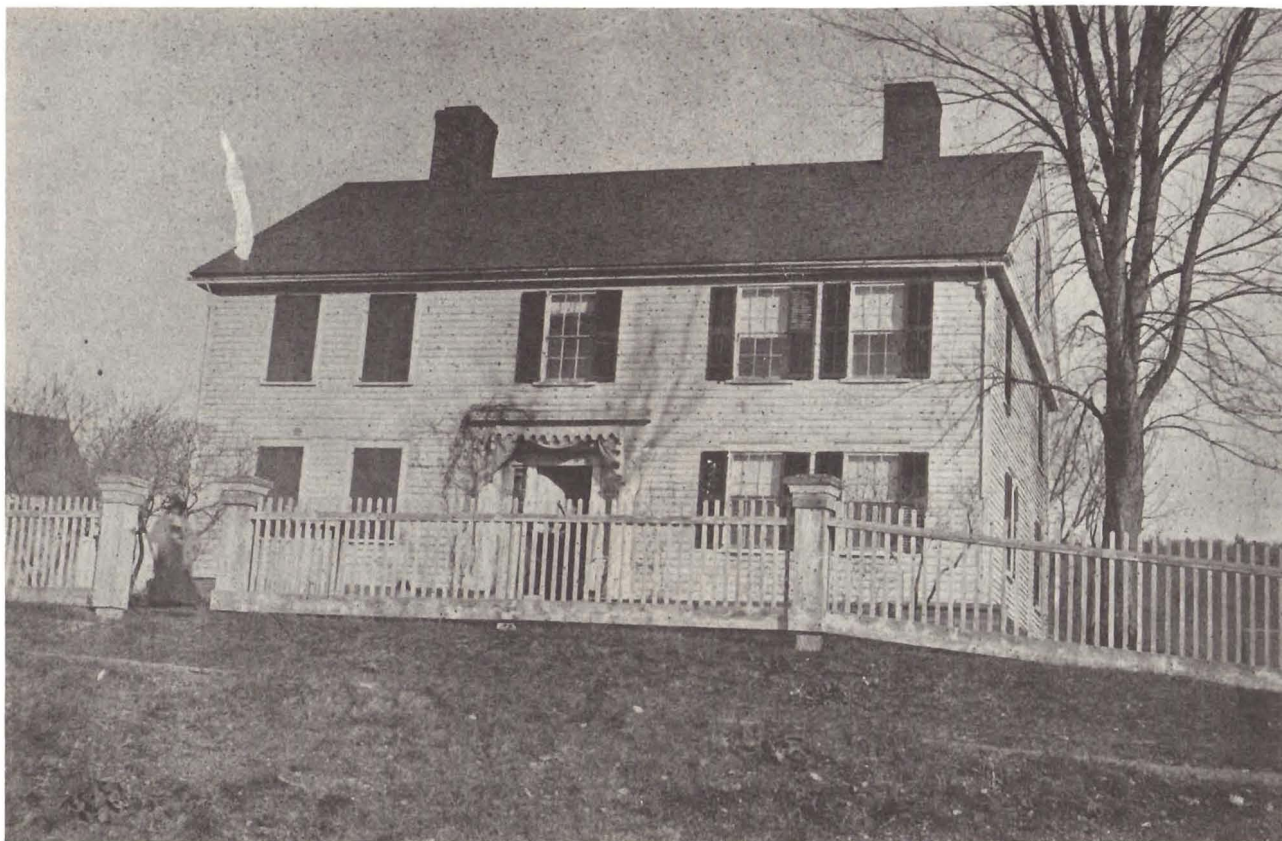


Barnes Street house, c. 1869, built for George W. Freeman, farmer and quarry foreman for Sheldon and Slason Marble Company. Note the marble block foundation, Italianate style cornice brackets, Greek revival style doorway with sidelights, peaked lintel boards over the windows and the elegant wrought iron balustrade over the Italianate style porch.



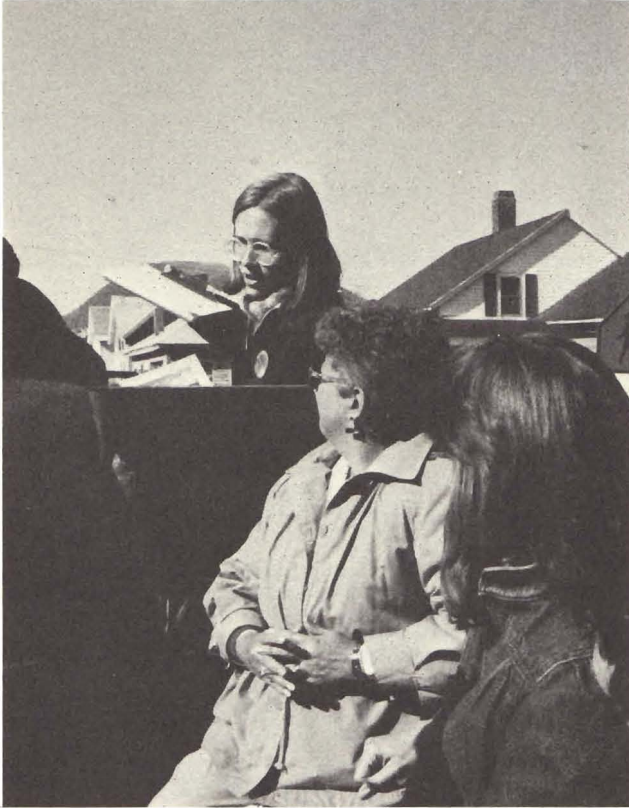
Pleasant Manor, built c. 1900, for Reuben Ross, summer home for the New York businessman. Used by the Dion family as a nursing home up to early '80s. Colonial revival style. Gambrel roof unusual for this area. Presently owned by John P. Rogers, who is renovating the interior.

Historic Houses



The Gilmore house, c. 1800, owned and occupied by Araby Gilmore, stands at the corner of Pleasant Street and Route 4. Federalist style with pedimented gable ends. Picture taken about 1875.

Historic Houses



After the parade on Saturday, Elsa Gilbertson (top center), assistant editor of the Survey Publication, represented the Vermont Division for Historic Preservation and conducted tours of historic houses located in West Ruiland. A team of horses pulled a wagon loaded with history buffs. Prior to the day of the town's 100th birthday celebration, Mr. Remington's 9th grade history class took a field trip, visiting the historic houses. The students in turn, assisted later with tours for younger students. Several 9th graders also volunteered to help Elsa Gilbertson on Saturday.



CITY OF RUTLAND
VERMONT 05701

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
JOHN J. DALEY, MAYOR
(802) 773-1800

October 3, 1986

Rosemary Brown, Chairman
Board of Selectmen
Town of West Rutland
West Rutland, VT 05777

Dear Ms. Brown:

On behalf of the City of Rutland I wish to extend congratulations to West Rutland on the occasion of your centennial as a town.

West Rutland, Rutland Town, Proctor and Rutland City were at one time the same community, and like fraternal twins have their differences but have much, much more in common. In this sense the City joins with your community in this historic occasion.

West Rutland enjoys a history unequalled in Vermont. The foundation of westside's heritage is the highly skilled artisan, who brought to our valley a rich cultural heritage as well as world-famous stoneworking skills. That culture has enriched the lives of all Vermonters, but especially blessed are those of us fortunate enough to share this broad valley with you.

The next century will be different from the last, and will bring its own challenges and opportunities. The recent success of your industrial park speaks to a bright future.

But regardless of what the future may bring, your first century must be the source of great pride for all West Rutlanders.

Sincerely,

John J. Daley
John J. Daley, Mayor
/mrm

Letter of congratulations from Mayor Daley, Rutland City, to West Rutland on the occasion of its centenary as a town. Rutland City assisted with barricades and city police were hired by West Rutland for the celebration.

The End of an Unforgettable Day

At dusk, the West Rutland population gathered in the open area back of the high school where the American Legion sponsored a spectacular fireworks display. Ed Beane, school board chairman and a member of the Centennial Committee, said it for everyone:

“The overwhelming feeling that I was left with was one of closeness *when*, at the conclusion of the day’s festivities, there was a display of fireworks, and *when* . . . unchoreographed . . . the assembled townspeople broke into a chorus of **Happy Birthday to the Town of West Rutland.**” And Ed adds that even now he recalls that moment with a shiver of emotion.

One of the remarkable aspects about West Rutland’s 100th anniversary celebration is that no public funds were allotted for the event. The account shows the following receipts:

| | |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Various Events | \$3,762.80 |
| American Legion, Post 87 | 1,000.00 |
| Sale of T-shirts and buttons | 1,534.50 |
| Donations | 210.00 |
| Patrons | 290.00 |
| Interest - bank | 42.43 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$6,839.73 |

After expenses were paid, a profit of \$1,810.04 was realized. With enthusiasm and pride for their town still running high, the committee spent \$371.41 of that money to decorate a Christmas tree in front of the Town Hall. With a balance of approximately \$1400 remaining, flyers were distributed throughout the town for a Green-Up day around Town Hall on May 2, starting at 8:30 a.m. Work parties brought rakes, shovels and wheelbarrows. The flagpole was painted, the marble steps scrubbed, the lawn raked and rolled and the sidewalks swept and edged. Hamburgers and soda were provided for the workers.

The Town Hall itself is on the register of historic buildings. It has an unused auditorium on the second floor that has a stage, a balcony and a seating capacity for 400 people. Thoughts are being directed to its potential for plays and dances. All indications are that a renaissance is well on its way in West Rutland.

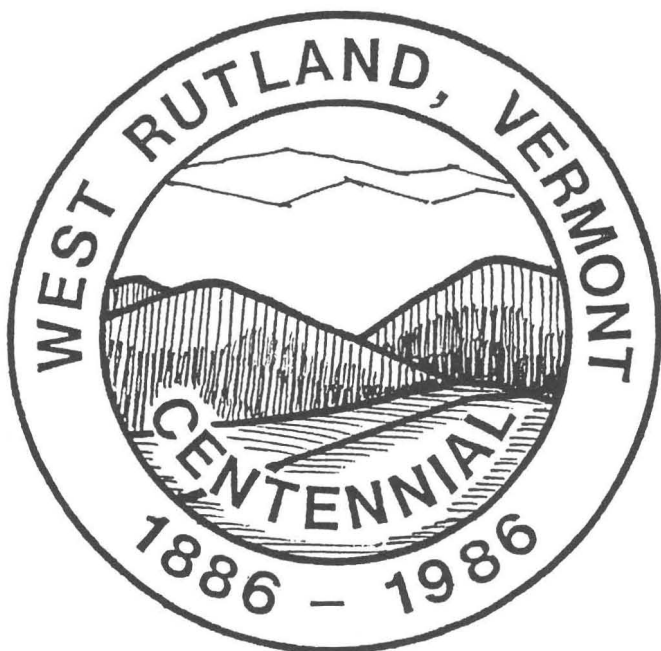
The purpose of a local historical society is not only to preserve the past of the community but to document the present, as well, for future generations. The 100th anniversary of West Rutland reflected its 19th century history. The recent successful celebration deserves permanent documentation to enrich the 200th anniversary in 2086.

West Rutland was once the wealthiest community in Vermont. In 1761 Rutland constituted 26,000 acres and included what is now Proctor, West Rutland, Rutland Town and Rutland City. The first division came when the area was divided into East and West Parish. The final separation came in 1886. Proctor presented a successful petition to be an independent town and West Rutland quickly followed suit. Both felt that too much money was going to support the Village of Rutland. With the two towns to the west becoming separate entities, the village to the east was incorporated as the City of Rutland in 1892, surrounded by the Town of Rutland.

Marble quarrying, manually operated, began in West Rutland in 1839. Then William Barnes developed a drill method and derrick removal that greatly expedited the industry. By the 1860s seven independent marble companies had a thousand employees and were worth more than two million dollars. When the railroad came in 1852, shipping was done from West Rutland. However, the Vermont Marble Company became large enough to buy out all the independent marble companies and West Rutland became a bedroom community to Proctor. The Vermont Marble Company paid over 50% of West Rutland's property taxes under protest for many years. In 1977 a court decision said that the marble company had been over-charged by \$400,000. The Town had to take out a loan to pay the debt. West Rutland, already becoming a depressed area, felt this blow keenly, both in population and economy. Now, in the mid-1980s, there is optimism that West Rutland is making a comeback.

Credits: Captions and picture selection, Ethel Seigny and Jean Ross.

Photography: David Jenne, p. 33; all other pictures, Evelyn Frazier and Joan Frazier Connell.



What It Means To Be An American
Citizen:

The United States Government is a free government. We have freedom of speech, freedom of choice, loyalty, voting, and a democratic system. In Russia they don't have any of these things. People need permission to come to the U.S.

The U.S. is a beautiful country. It has beautiful forests and cities. School is an important part of my life. When I raise the flag some days it makes me feel good.

The Statue of Liberty is a growing part of our history.

West Rutland is a hundred years old this year and I'm proud of it.

Bethany Gladzik
Grade 4



RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
101 CENTER STREET, RUTLAND, VERMONT 05701
(802) 775-2006; 773-3417

Membership in the Society is open to all upon payment of appropriate dues. (See the dues schedule below.) With membership, for its period, go a subscription to the Quarterly, any newsletters, a copy of the Annual Report, entitlement to vote at business meetings, and benefits accruing from support of the Society's Museums, exhibits, programs, collections and library. The year through which membership is paid and the category are noted on all address labels.

Please send any address change on Postal Service Form 3576 (a postcard freely available at your local post office).

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Annual dues categories are: Sustaining \$100 or more | Contributing \$15 |
| Sponsor \$ 25 | Regular \$ 5 |

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Special one-payment categories are: Life \$125 | Memorial \$150 |
|--|----------------|

Advance payment for 2 or 3 years is welcome, helping to reduce costs.

Please make checks payable to: Rutland Historical Society
and send to: Treasurer

62 Ormsbee Ave., Proctor, VT. 05765

Manuscripts are invited; address correspondence to the Managing Editor.

Editor: Michael L. Austin

Managing Editor: Jean C. Ross

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RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
101 Center Street
Rutland, Vermont 05701

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